

**Message to Caregivers who have recently lost cash assistance for children they are caring for!  
Please read this letter to find out how you may still be eligible.**

On November 1, 2011, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) changed the rules for “child-only” TANF cash grants. A new state law required DSHS to begin counting the income of all caregivers caring for a relative’s or unrelated child, in addition to the TANF child’s income, when determining eligibility for a cash grant.

Your grant was recently closed because DSHS did not receive the requested information about your household members and their income. We understand that in the past we have not asked for this information and that this change must have come as a surprise to many caregivers. We are now reaching out to caregivers whose child-only grant closed in November because they may have concluded for themselves that they would not have qualified.

Some important information for you to consider:

- If the child you are caring for was placed in your home by a state or tribal child welfare agency and the case is still open, you may not be subject to means testing.
- 50% of your earned income (wages, tips, commissions, profits from self-employment activities) is disregarded. For example, this means if your earned income is \$3,000 per month, we only count \$1,500.
- Your unearned income (pensions, veterans’ benefits, unemployment benefits, regular Social Security or Social Security Disability benefits) is counted at the full amount. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits are not counted at all.
- We only count the income of the caretaker adults. If you have other adult children in the household we don’t count them or their income. Nor would we count the income of other adults in your home, such as an ailing parent and or sibling you may be caring for.
- Under the new state law, 300% of the Federal Poverty Level based on family size is the maximum income allowed to qualify for a child-only grant. For a family of three this comes to \$4,633 per month. This means that if there are three in your household and your countable family income is at or below this amount, you may be eligible for a TANF grant for the child in your care.
- You do not need to provide Social Security numbers for anyone in your household except the child you are applying for. We ask for SSNs only if we have no other way to verify your income.

If you would like to reapply for benefits you can do so at your local Community Service Office or online at: **WashingtonConnection.org**.

If you have questions regarding this policy change or about reapplying, please call this toll-free number:  
1-877-501-2233

If you need assistance completing an application, please contact your local Kinship Navigator. Enclosed you will find a list of navigators and their contact information.

**Washington State's Kinship Navigators Serving  
Grandparents and Relatives Raising Children**

- **Benton, Franklin, Columbia, Garfield, Walla Walla, Yakima, Kittitas and Asotin Counties:** Catholic Family and Child Services, **Kinship Navigators:** Tina Khabir (also Spanish Speaking), [tkhabir@ccyakima.org](mailto:tkhabir@ccyakima.org) 509- 946-4645, Ext. 2021 and Mary Pleger, [mpleger@ccyakima.org](mailto:mpleger@ccyakima.org), 509-965-7100 or 800-246-2962 **Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, Grant, Lincoln, and Adams Counties: Catholic Family and Child Services, Kinship Navigator:** Jennifer Santillan. [jsantillan@ccyakima.org](mailto:jsantillan@ccyakima.org) 509-662-6761 ext. 4557 or 1-800-261-1094.
- **Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties:** Children's Home Society, Southwest Washington region, **Kinship Navigator:** Tammy Bedlion, [Tammyb@chs-wa.org](mailto:Tammyb@chs-wa.org), 360 695-1325 ext 4214
- **Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties:** Rural Resources, **Kinship Navigator:** Vicki Pontecorvo, [vpontecorvo@ruralresources.org](mailto:vpontecorvo@ruralresources.org), 509-684-3932
- **Spokane County:** Elder Services - Spokane Mental Health, **Kinship Navigator:** Angela Andreas, [aandreas@smhca.org](mailto:aandreas@smhca.org), 509-458-7450 X 3007
- **Whitman County:** Council on Aging and Human Services, **Kinship Navigator:** Amanda Rich, [coaamanda@qwestoffice.net](mailto:coaamanda@qwestoffice.net), 509-397-4305 ext 102
- **King County:** Catholic Community Services, **Kinship Navigator:** Helen Sawyer, [HelenS@ccsww.org](mailto:HelenS@ccsww.org), 206-445-1360 x210
- **Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties:** Family Education and Support Services, **Kinship Navigator:** Lynn Urvina, [Lynn@FamilyESS.org](mailto:Lynn@FamilyESS.org), and **Spanish-speaking Navigator Assistant:** Rosa Venancio, [Rosa@FamilyESS.org](mailto:Rosa@FamilyESS.org), 360-754-7629 or 1-877-813-2828
- **Pierce County:** HopeSparks, **Kinship Navigators:** Rosalyn Alber [ralber@hopesparks.org](mailto:ralber@hopesparks.org), 253-565-4484 ext. 112, and Jesie Holden [jholden@hopesparks.org](mailto:jholden@hopesparks.org) 253-565-4484 ext. 134
- **Whatcom County:** Northwest Regional Council (AAA), **Kinship Navigator:** Laina Berry, [BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov); 360-676-6749
- **Snohomish County, Family Center of South Snohomish County, Kinship Caregivers Support Program:** Amy Dennis [adennis@lcsnw.org](mailto:adennis@lcsnw.org), 425 670-8984
- **Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, and Pacific Counties,** Olympic Area Agency on Aging, Kinship Caregivers Support Program: Eric Nessa, [Eric.Nessa@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Eric.Nessa@dshs.wa.gov), 360-538-2458, toll free 866-582-1485

For more information on kinship care benefits and services in WA State, visit the Kinship Care Website: [www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare)